CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

For Immediate Release

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CIRM ANNOUNCES NEW FACULTY II AWARDS TO SUPPORT EARLY CAREERS OF PROMISING STEM CELL RESEARCHERS

PALO ALTO, Calif., August 13, 2008 – The next generation of stem cell researchers in California got a $59 million boost today, with New Faculty II Awards flowing to 23 promising California researchers who are early in their careers.

The Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), the 29 member governing board of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the state stem cell agency, approved the grants at a meeting in which they also discussed the definition of a California supplier, and considered two recommendations from the Medical and Ethical Standards working group, and welcomed Dr. Robert Quint as a newly appointed member of the board.

The New Faculty II Awards is the second round of CIRM funding to support M.D. and Ph.D. scientists who are at critical early stages of establishing careers in stem cell research. Investigators funded by these grants receive salary and research support for five years, creating a stable environment for building innovative research programs at a point in their careers when funding can be difficult to obtain. The average age of a first-time recipient of funding from the National Institutes of Health is 42 to 44 years.

Robert Klein, chairman of the ICOC, said supporting these young faculty members is essential to establishing a strong generation of scientists in California whose focus is stem cell research. “A critical part of CIRM’s success relies on creating a broad foundation of scientists and clinicians who are committed to stem cell research and who are committed to delivering stem cell therapies to patients. Without California’s funding, the gap in federal funding would eliminate an entire generation of new clinicians and scientists,” he said. Klein continued, “The average age for a physician scientist to receive their first grant from the National Institutes of Health is now 43 years old. Who would dedicate their life to a field where they could not have a chance to prove the value of their ideas until they were 43?”

This second round of New Faculty Awards builds on the 22 grants given out in December 2007. Today’s grants fund 12 scientists and 11 physician scientists. In each case, funded researchers could work with any type of stem cell including adult or embryonic, animal or human. “We expect these awards to play a significant role in changing the career trajectory of funded researchers, encouraging talented young investigators to pursue careers in stem cell research,” said Dr. Alan Trounson, president of CIRM. “I’m pleased that great research has the opportunity for funding. We now have a very high caliber of new faculty with a total of 45 awards from two independent RFA rounds.”

The board postponed final decision on 31 grants in Tiers 2 and 3 until its September meeting. Nine grants in Tier 2 will be considered individually at that meeting. The Grants Working Group recommends Tier 2 for funding “if funds are available”. Three of today’s approved grants were moved from Tier 2 into Tier 1 and funded.

CIRM received 54 applications from 32 institutions. Institutions with an accredited medical school could recommend up to five faculty members minus the number of New Faculty I awards received. Other institutions could nominate up to two faculty members minus the number awarded in the New Faculty I competition. This second round of New Faculty awards differs slightly from the first round in the focus on recruiting promising new physician-researchers to the field of stem cell research, and in requiring funded

scientists to name mentors who will guide them toward establishing successful, productive careers in stem cell research.

Other ICOC business

In addition to awarding New Faculty II grants, the ICOC considered two recommendations from the Medical and Ethical Standards working group. The first established a process for petitioning the ICOC to allow specific hESC lines created before November 2006 to be allowed for use in CIRM-funded research. Currently, some lines are unavailable for use because current regulations apply retroactively. The second recommendation governs the use of embryos created for reproductive purposes before August 13, 2008 for which the original IVF client compensated the donor of the sperm or egg.

The ICOC set an interim definition for California suppliers, which refers to companies that supply grantees with products and services in CIRM-funded research and facilities grants. CIRM grant recipients have a goal of purchasing at least 50% of products and services from California suppliers. CIRM will now begin the process of formally adopting a permanent regulation, forecast to take approximately 6 months. That draft language can be found here: www.cirm.ca.gov/meetings/pdf/2008/081208_item_10.pdf.

The following grants were approved at today's meeting:

PI	Institution	Application Number	Total Requested Budget
Blelloch, Dr. Robert Hector	University of California, San Francisco	RN2-00906-1	$3,029,897
Bruneau, Dr. Benoit G.	The J. David Gladstone Institutes	RN2-00903-1	$2,847,600
Chang, Dr. Ching-Pin	Stanford University	RN2-00909-1	$3,155,931
Crump, Dr. Gage DeKoeyer	University of Southern California	RN2-00916-1	$2,396,871
Gomperts, Dr. Brigitte N.	University of California, Los Angeles	RN2-00904-1	$2,381,572
Grikscheit, Dr. Tracy Cannon	Children's Hospital of Los Angeles	RN2-00946-1	$3,240,000
He, Dr. Lin	University of California, Berkeley	RN2-00923-1	$1,499,994
Huang, Dr. Yadong	The J. David Gladstone Institutes	RN2-00952-1	$2,847,600
Jamieson, Dr. Catriona	University of California, San Diego	RN2-00910-1	$3,065,572
Klein, Dr. Ophir David	University of California, San Francisco	RN2-00933-1	$3,075,251
Knoepfler, Dr. Paul Stewart	University of California, Davis	RN2-00922-1	$2,158,161
McCloskey, Dr. Kara Elizabeth	University of California, Merced	RN2-00921-1	$1,706,255
Monuki, Dr. Edwin Shinichi	University of California, Irvine	RN2-00915-1	$2,994,328
Parast, Dr. Mana	University of California, San Diego	RN2-00931-1	$3,078,580
Passegue, Dr. Emmanuelle	University of California, San Francisco	RN2-00934-1	$2,274,368
Reiter, Dr. Jeremy F.	University of California, San Francisco	RN2-00919-1	$2,259,092
Ren, Dr. Bing	Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research	RN2-00905-1	$1,726,564
Ribas, Dr. Antoni	University of California, Los Angeles	RN2-00902-1	$3,072,000
Varghese, Dr. Shyni	University of California, San Diego	RN2-00945-1	$2,300,569
Willenbring, Dr. Holger	University of California, San Francisco	RN2-00950-1	$3,032,510
Ying, Dr. Qilong	University of Southern California	RN2-00938-1	$2,413,650
Yu, Dr. Benjamin D.	University of California, San Diego	RN2-00908-1	$3,056,649
Zayas, Dr. Ricardo M.	San Diego State University	RN2-00940-1	$1,725,830

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Approved CIRM Grants as of August 2008:

Institution	Research Grants	Facilities Grants	Total Grants	Funds (Requested and Awarded)
Stanford University	30	2	32	$93,896,310
UC San Francisco	27	2	29	$82,378,058
UCLA	19	2	21	$51,315,992
UC Irvine	16	2	18	$51,228,810
USC	12	2	14	$48,467,604
San Diego Consortium	0	1	1	$43,000,000
UC Davis	7	2	9	$35,766,586
UC San Diego	18	1	19	$32,853,328
UC Berkeley	5	2	7	$29,454,489
Buck Institute	2	2	4	$25,429,364
Gladstone Institutes	10	1	11	$18,787,142
The Burnham Institute	12	1	13	$18,180,796
UC Santa Cruz	5	2	7	$16,573,636
The Salk Institute	9	1	10	$16,036,730
CHLA	5	1	6	$11,701,083
Scripps	4	1	5	$9,317,989
UC Merced	3	1	4	$8,010,498
UC Santa Barbara	1	2	3	$6,687,931
UC Riverside	3	1	4	$6,055,762
Ludwig	3	0	3	$2,473,053
CalTech	1	0	1	$2,071,823
City of Hope	3	0	3	$2,036,042
San Diego State	1	0	1	$1,725,830
HBMRI	1	0	1	$714,654
CHORI	1		1	$55,000
Novocell, Inc.	1		1	$48,950
Cedars-Sinai	1		1	$46,886
Totals	200	29	229	$614,314,346

About CIRM CIRM was established in early 2005 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided $3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 229 research and facility grants totaling more than $614 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for embryonic and pluripotent stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.

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